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SENSITIVE

DEPT FOR AF/W, AF/RSA, AF/EX  
PARIS FOR AFRICA WATCHER

E.O. 12958: N/A  
TAGS: [AFIN](#) [AMGT](#) [PGOV](#) [KDEM](#) [SG](#)  
SUBJECT: SENEGAL: REQUEST FUNDS FOR LOCAL ELECTION OBSERVER  
MISSION-CORRECTED VERSION

1. This is an action request.

2. Embassy Dakar requests funding to support Embassy coverage of local elections slated for March 22, 2009.

3. Breakdown of funding request follows:

Observers for Dakar region: \$261x4 observers= \$1,044  
Observers for regions outside of Dakar: \$120x13(regions)x3(1 direct-hire + 1 FSN + 1 driver)X 2 Nights =\$9,360  
Total: \$10,404

4. Justification: Senegal is one of Africa's leading democracies and this local election will be the last major one before Presidential elections slated for 2012. As of this writing, Senegal is entering a critical junction in its democratic development as an aging President is preparing to depart the political arena while paving the way for the next generation of leaders, some of whom will surely emerge from these elections. In the meanwhile, the country's leading opposition parties, who boycotted legislative elections in July 2007 citing massive fraud in the 2007 Presidential elections, have reluctantly agreed to participate in the election even though they continue to vociferously argue for substantial revisions to the electoral rolls which they deem corrupted. Thus, the foundation for pre and post election tensions does exist. As election observers the Embassy will not only be able to provide Washington thorough and timely reporting but the very presence of international observers may help to ensure that voting is carried out smoothly and without trouble. It will also serve as a signal to the Senegalese and our European and African partners that the U.S. is serious about democracy and stability in Senegal and the region.

Thank you for your consideration

Bernicat